



File Code: 2330**Date:** October 7, 2015**Subject:** Clarification of UTV Use on Motorized Trails**To:** File

In February of 2010, the Record of Decision enacting Forest Plan travel direction for certain areas of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest Travel Management Plan (ROD) was signed. The Travel Plan ROD restricted motorized vehicles to open motorized routes identified on the Forest Plan interim Roads and Trails GIS layer displayed on page 53 of the 2009 Revised Forest Plan. This restriction did not specify the season of use or type of vehicle that is allowed on designated routes, but was to be used in conjunction with the Forest Visitor map until such time as route specific motorized use designations were completed.

In March of 2011, the Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact Designation of Summer Motorized Travel on the Madison Ranger District was signed. The decision made route specific designations for vehicle type and season of use displayed in the updated Environmental Assessment and published in the Tobacco Root and Gravelly Motorized Vehicle Use Maps (MVUM).

The designation of All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) trails open to wheeled motorized vehicles 50 inches or less in width was a standard that was an important component of each of the travel planning efforts. ATVs were defined as "Off Highway Vehicles less than or equal to 50 inches in width with three or more low-pressure tires, handle-bar steering and a seat designed to be straddled by the operator."

Since then, the motor vehicle industry has developed off highway vehicles with a wheelbase of less than or equal to 50 inches in width that have side-by-side seating. Side-by-sides or Utility Task Vehicles (UTVs) that are less than 50 inches wide and are "trail vehicles" are considered to be within the scope of the definition of an ATV under our existing travel decisions. These types of vehicles do not exceed the 50 inches width restriction for the ATV trails and thus I consider them to be allowable on the designated ATV trails as of September 30, 2015.

This letter clarifies that the use of vehicles 50 inches or less in width is permitted on roads and trails designated as open per the FEIS and ROD of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest Travel Plan direction and the published MVUMs. Vehicle width is defined as the overall width outside of the tire to outside of the tire.

MELANY GLOSSA
Forest Supervisor

cc: Forest Leadership Team

